

Southside Community Garden, a program of By Any Means 104.

Background / Introduction

Southside Community Garden (SCG) is a project of *By Any Means 104*. It is a nonprofit with a goal to restore the relationship between food consumption, food growing, and promoting justice through food. The organization is a community of home gardeners, partners, and organizers who share a passion for addressing the impact that racism has had on the health and diet of Black and brown people living in Tarrant County - specifically in the 76104 zip code.

SCG began in 2022 when Co-Founder Patrice Jones wanted to bring awareness to the murder of Atatiana Jefferson by painting a mural in the 76104 area where Jefferson lived. Patrice was looking to provide food and drinks to the volunteers helping paint the mural when she noticed there wasn't a grocery store nearby. Upon further research, Jones discovered that "redlining," a discriminatory practice in which services are withheld from potential customers who reside in neighborhoods classified as 'hazardous' to investors. Although in 1968, the Fair Housing Act was passed to fight the practice of redlining and made it illegal to do so, it's still the problem today in 76104. With a significant number of racial and ethnic minorities with low-income residents living in 76104, 38% being Black and 43% being brown. The issue of redlining has led to a condition known as "food apartheid." A system of segregation that divides people with access to an abundance of nutritious food and those who have been denied that access due to systemic injustice. Issues such as food apartheid have caused a low life expectancy of 66.7 years in the 76104 zip code. It is the lowest in the state of Texas, while the average life expectancy is 78.5. Not only is it causing a decline in lifespan, but it's also the root cause of many diseases such as obesity, diabetes, depression, and many more.

Currently, Southside Community Garden is focused on restoring the relationship between food consumption and food growing—promoting justice through food. The organization started by constructing home-based raised bed gardens, built free by donors and volunteers. With an average cost of \$800 per-raised bed and \$200 to maintain it. This organization has been able to develop 50 raised beds and provide seedlings seasonally and master gardeners who maintain the planting-beds four times a month.

Campaign Brief

The organization needs to raise awareness about its program and build trust. This will result in needed cash, in-kind donations, and volunteers to increase access to healthy produce. As well as decrease diseases while improving overall health in Fort Worth's 76104 zip code.

Objectives/targets

This organization is also looking to bring on more home gardeners, volunteers for build days, and volunteers to fulfill administrative duties. By increasing awareness to this nonprofit organization, SGC can fulfill the funds for gardening materials, volunteers for longer stays, and the overall goal of improving life expectancy.

Target Audiences

- Residents in 76104
- Gardening enthusiasts
- College students/young adults
- Faith-based organizations/churchgoers
- Corporate executives
- HR managers
- Marketing directors
- Business executives
- Small Owned Businesses
- BLM Advocates

Positioning

The philosophy of “teach to fish” is why Southside Community Garden is like no other. Rather than providing a solution only for immediate needs related to hunger and food insecurity, this nonprofit offers sustainable food for families. It is a solution that lasts longer. Additionally, food is provided right in their backyard, without the need for transportation, which many do not have access to. SCG also gives the knowledge to reproduce vegetables and fruits without help and even be able to sell for profit themselves.

Key Messages

Southside Community Garden is a community of people with a passion and commitment for creating justice through food by giving access to produce in the backyard of residents living in 76104, a community known for having the lowest life expectancy in Texas. To alleviate this issue, SCG builds raised beds and provides education for sustainability because food autonomy is a vital part of justice.